

Editorial Consultant's Note: From its Premier Issue in June 2001, <u>Mail Call</u> has provided an expressive forum for Day Treatment Center veterans. That was our original intent three years ago, for we have long believed that one way to mental health is in seeking out and nurturing members' talents. Sharing these talents with others furthers personal growth and health. This purpose remains evident in the essays (long and short), poetry, and artwork in <u>Mail Call</u>'s pages. But over time, we have taken on a secondary purpose—that of informing the Medical Center community of the dynamic programming, activities, and personalities in Day Treatment Center. Our greater visibility has helped to expand membership; this, in turn, has generated greater enthusiasm and enabled us to expand our offerings—a valuable "feedback loop," indeed! We welcome your comments about our efforts.

Judith A. Moser, MA, LSW

### The Contemplative Life

Fred DiDomenico

In order to be "with it" in any aspect of current living, it is necessary to live one's all-encompassing life like a whippet chasing the rabbit at the track. Constantly on the extreme go; racing on a treadmill toward goals decreed by some unknowables; gobbling fast food; sleeping with muscles tense; waking with the wheels of the psyche already racing; charging from one activity to another. The most gruesome aspect of it is that those who fail to keep up with the race are made to feel horribly disoriented and inadequate.

There are those who instinctively or consciously refuse to take part in the race. They are the ones who must exercise a great effort of will to live otherwise. It is extremely difficult. It is necessary to resist universal pressure and keep the self in hand every moment in order to keep from being drawn along into the race.

But the rewards of the contemplative life are great. Life is deeper, richer, vastly more satisfying. In contrast to fast food is the slow, lingering savoring of food undisturbed by the need to keep up with the competitive, combative mode of conversation that is part of the race and that makes an invitation to dinner more like being enticed into an ambush. Chewing food extensively, extracting to the full all of its natural and contrived taste reveals a hitherto unknown sensory experience—and even may serve to dissipate the obesity problem, since slowly savoring the food sates the appetite with quality rather than quantity.

It is so with all aspects of the contemplative life. Children ushered into the life of a scholar rather than into the extreme pressure cooker of the present educational philosophers will emerge with wide, deeper, and therefore more comprehensive and more enduring judgment. Less litigation.

Reading a book or a poem, listening to music, or viewing a piece of art offer richer rewards to those who take time to contemplate and fully immerse themselves.

All aspects of reverence for life are disappearing. Success and achievement are measured by the primitive and barbaric mode of counting the number of humans killed, saying, "We have killed this or that many," as if to say, "We have achieved this or that much."

Imposing in humans the need to keep up with the race is to kill that vast part of life which people would have if they had the freedom to live the contemplative life.

### What Easter Means to Us

Today we need the Easter spirit more than ever. Everyday the news shows us stories of war, and frames of violence assault our senses. How can the peace and rebirth that this holiday evokes diminish the black stain of violence? When looking back at past Easter holidays, they felt similar to the Christmas holidays, the winter festivals where families came together for a big, shared feast and decorations all around the community. As I get older, Easter takes on a whole new meaning. I see the spiritual connection it has to all life. The month that it is in, Passover in one faith, conquering death in one life, bringing new life in another. The April rains freshen the earth, preparing and softening it for the green plants to spring forth. The buds on the trees promise a fresh coloring of expansive green. The longer days, warmer air, and activity of the wildlife remind us to awaken as well, to venture out,



to touch Mother Earth, barefoot and sweet. When was the last time that I walked on the cool, fresh, soft grass or felt the mud ooze between my toes and splash on my calves? Why have we become so disconnected from nature? Maybe that is why Easter is not such a recognized time of peace anymore. There is so little of it. When we walk on the earth barefoot, listening to the sounds, smelling the fresh new life, or watching the activity, the dance of the breeze with the newly leafed trees—there, that is where the sound of peace is felt, relished, and breathed. Today will be the day. I will feel Easter and keep that in my heart, to keep hope alive when I see what is on the news what is happening in the hot, dry land so far away—a land where people do not know much of Easter and where we do not know much of peace.

### Tammy Jabarin

Easter is a time when I think about peace.

There are animal babies at this time of year, and new flowers remind me of the flower children of the late 1960s. Ever since that time, the young people seem to care more about the environment and each other and give me hope and strength to carry on.

It also reminds me of Christmas—"Peace on Earth." But when? War has always existed and probably always will, because many people discriminate against others who do not share their views or differences. As long as there are people who think they are better than others and know the better way, there will be conflict.

### John Adler

I do not watch t.v. because it is violent, and the news is depressing. Easter is a very old rite of spring, bringing renewal and all that it means. Songs and dancing, the Easter bunnies, and children. A happy time, the earth is green after the dark of winter. Daffodils and other flowers. I planted some seeds and look forward to seeing their flowers grow, as time and weather permit. It is not a small thing to have a flower garden and have something to look forward to.

### Peter T. Evans

Easter is a holiday that comes in April, the time when Jesus rose from the dead. He died for our sins. He is the Son of God. He is the world's savior and will never be forgotten.

George Lee

### Fathers

I'll always remember my father. He was always there to help me. Now I am a father, and I'm always there to help my sons however I can. There are good fathers, and there are bad fathers who seem not to care about their children. Instead, they only care about themselves. This is sad, because most children look up to their fathers. Children seem to depend on mothers, but Dad is always there as a backup. There have been times in my life when Dad would say, "Not to worry" and would immediately help us with whatever problem we had.



### Norm Fischer

I can remember at three years of age sitting on my father's knees while mother took our picture at a campground. I still have the picture, though my parents are gone. It's strange how the positive actions of the past stay with us through our older years. My father's tender, loving attitude toward his children remained all his life, "keeping in touch" as he made his Sunday afternoon calls to his children.

As his job at ORNL (Oak Ridge, Tennessee) took him all over the world, it was hard for him to be retired at the age of 68 years. I believe he would have passed up retirement if his radiation badge hadn't dictated, "Retire, you've done your part." His four developments for the labs put him into a well-known circle of friends and associates worldwide. Retirement was hard, but he kept busy doing the family genealogy and writing letters to the editor. His influence on his family was profound. And he was always a living, informative fountain of knowledge when we needed him.

All through his life, he adhered to the peacetime use of atomic energy, and his eleven years' study and production of radon detection equipment was widely known. While he would have liked his daughters to follow in his footsteps, it turned out we all followed the beat of a different drummer and went our own ways.

Dad, as you are with your mother now, the world salutes you for making it a safer place for us all.

Judy Perdue

One of my first memories as a child included my father, and it wasn't a pleasant one. But I do remember his anguish and anger at himself, even though I was three, when he ran over my leg with the car. Off and on he was in my life until I was five, when he became a permanent fixture. My dad was a workaholic, alcoholic, fun-loving guy. He was always chuckling and mild-mannered and preferred to be alone working on one of his many hobbies. When I think about him, I think about art, cars, and the other signs and symbols of his many passions and talents. He loved ancient Egyptian culture and art, painted ceramics that adorned our home, drew copies of hieroglyphics from books or from memories of books or t.v. shows. He even decorated a metal casket like King Tut's sarcophagus. There we stored the Christmas tree every year. He was unique, a bit eccentric. Who else did I know who had a dad with a hearse, decorated in blood red velvet with a skull on the dash? My dad! He was quirky. Be he was almost like an illusion. I never saw him as a real figure in my life. He worked a lot, various shifts, sometimes all day or all night. When he was home, or before he got home, he drank, smoked, loved to party, especially alone. He was proud of his cars, did a lot of the typical male chores (like taking out the trash, yard work, or fixing things around the house). My parents were very old school, the girls did the housework and the boys did the rest. They did boy things. I remember the day my dad was playing softball with my brothers and some neighbor kids, and he twisted his knee. His knee was never the same after that.

I feel bad that I never had a relationship with him. As a young child, I did. I was his first. I remember seeing a picture of me sitting in a chair combing his hair as he sat on the floor. I'll never forget that picture. Maybe the pressures of keeping a family, my parents' divorce, making ends meet, alcoholism, and other issues kept us apart. But I do wish I knew him. I mean really knew him. As I said, he is an illusion. But at least I can say I had a dad. We haven't spoken in years, but that's okay. We never really did when we lived together either. I have come to realize, as I have met people through the years, that many fathers were very similar to him. He is not so unique in the way he lived and acted. My husband's father was never home either (always working). So...that's the way it is.

### When I Was a Little...

When I was a little boy... It was a time when both of my parents were living (I was 4 ½). Being the youngest and only boy, of course I was my mother's favorite. I remember that my mother worked at Dewey's and used to bring me a chocolate milkshake from work. I remember being at home most of the day, just her and me. I remember her taking me to be baptized and taking me to kindergarten. I would like to write much more about my mother. She did love to dance and had a great laugh. My time with her was nowhere near long enough for me to really get to know her and to get the things that only a mother can give to her son. I'm sure that there was a great deal that I missed that might have helped me or prevented me from some of the unfortunate situations that have occurred in my life.



### Ralph Guy

When I was a little boy, life was unique, full of wonder and surprise. We think life is all about timing now. Just imagine then. My family rose at 5:30 every morning, wash-ups for the parents and baths for the children. Then we got dressed up for the day, according to the weather. Then breakfast and chores. Mother would put change in our handkerchiefs, but by then Dad had already left for work. Mother would walk us to school, stopping by Mr. Shulerman's candy store for a piece of candy that we could have with our milk and cookies. Times changed years later, you know, we went to school on our own. We studied hard to keep our grades up and joined junior high school varsity teams to keep ourselves physically fit. Then came the senior prom and the snowballing effects of life in general. Today I am a pop pop. Life is so beautiful.

#### Walter Watts

When I was a little girl, around four or five years of age, I remember being envious of my older brothers and sisters going to school and having a lot of fun while I stayed home with my mother. I remember listening to them talk about things like homework and learning all about arithmetic and reading stories. When I was home with my mother, I always enjoyed going "downtown" when my mother went to pay the telephone, gas, and electric bills. Sometimes we would stop in the stores (Strawbridge's, Gimbel's, or Lit Brothers) and window shop. It was fun to ride the 33 or 61 bus to Center City. I remember the banks had huge chandeliers and marble stairs. Everyone was dressed up in the stores, and the salespeople were very professional. There were elevator operators in the elevators, and there were people sweeping the floors and keeping the stores clean. The bus drivers would call out each stop by the street names, so the riders could prepare to get off. I remember thinking how much fun we had on these the trips my mother and I took, but I always looked forward to my brothers and sisters coming home to talk about their day at school.

### Harriet Lahr

When I was a little boy, I had the best time in the world. I played all the time, all kinds of different games, baseball, football, and basketball. My friend and I also had a clubhouse made out of cardboard boxes. We would charge three cents to join the club. We all had b.b. guns and would hunt small animals and birds just for fun.

I would enjoy family visits and family gatherings. I used to read the Bible to my grandmother every night, which made me feel good. I had a next-door friend who would take me fishing on weekends sometimes. He provided everything I needed. But most of all, I had a blue bicycle that I loved to ride. I spent a lot of time riding to the store for other people. Most of all, I loved God's gift to me, my family.

When I was a little boy...that was so long ago. I still think of myself as being young. I can't remember a thing. It seems as though it was just a little while ago. I still feel about the same. People have tried to change me, but to them and to myself I still remain about the same.

### George Lee

When I was a little girl, I had a lot going on in my young life in the family that I was born into. My parents were very poor and lived in a rundown neighborhood. One of my first memories is not a great one. It was when my father accidentally ran over my leg with the car. He didn't see my by the side of the car. I wanted to go with him, and he started the car, which was parked on a hill. It rolled forward and over my leg. The ambulance came. My dad was very upset, and my mom came home from work, also really upset. I remember people all around and lying on the couch screaming, in the ambulance screaming, at the hospital screaming. What is funny is that the only memory before that one was when we bought the car, a '69 Oldsmobile with a convertible top. It was nighttime. Since I was born in '69, I believe I must have two or three at the time.

As you can guess, I was very accident-prone. I fell down the stairs quite often and had lots of stitches, fell off a fence I was climbing, off a bike. Always hurting myself. I wish I were still as fearless as I was then.

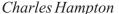
Later, when I was about four or five, I remember my parents getting divorced, sitting in the courtroom, going home with my dad or mom. My dad had me during the week and Mom on the weekend. But Mom was very broke so many weekends she didn't have a car to pick up my brother and me. One day my dad decided to take us, my brother and stepmom, to live in Florida with my grandparents. My first memory of Florida was the guy in the car we had to follow—pulling off the side of the road to pick up a turtle crossing the street. When we got to our new home, he had one of his kids get a set of pliers to kill the turtle and made soup out of it. Yuk!!! But soon I became a full-fledged tomboy without the accident-proneness of my earlier years. Florida sucked!!!

### Tammy Jabarin

When I was a little boy...that was a long time ago. But I do remember knocking down the Christmas tree one time. My folks put our gifts under the tree but tied strings to them. This way we would pull one gift at a time and open it. The surprised look on our faces is what my folks liked to see. It was a good time and brightened Christmas morning with our family. It also told whether we liked one gift over another. I was also moonstruck with the electric Lionel train on the tracks.

### Norm Fischer

When I was a little boy, I had a very good time, and life wasn't a bother. I had one sister and one brother and a German Shepherd dog. I still think about that dog because he was my best friend. That dog used to walk me to school and back every day until one day. After that I walked down the railroad track looking for him. I figured someone kidnapped him or worse that somebody maybe killed him. Well, I never saw him again. When we moved, we got another dog, named Princess. We kept her until she died of old age. Those were some good memories.





# "Nothing ventured, nothing gained"

(Topic grew out of DTC thought for the day May 27, 2004)

"Nothing from nothing leaves nothing," as the song goes. The surest way not to succeed is not to know what you want. Employees who don't care and make mistakes should be discharged, and only those employees who try should get benefits. "It is better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." Never give up, because there is always hope. It is okay to ask for help! And "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Then again, one has to do something to make a mistake. The greatest risk is in not taking one.



John Adler

Let's just think for a little. If you don't do a little, you don't receive a thing. You have to put out a little something for anything to come of it. A little action is necessary at times. To do something is good.

### George Lee

This saying makes me immediately think that if you don't try something, anything, you will never do anything. Even getting dressed to go to work or doing something like fixing a meal. If you don't start the process, you'll never get to work or to the dinner table. I guess there should be a dictionary here so I could look up the word "venture." I don't think I ever used that word in any other sentence. Maybe it has something to do with adventure, which I like to think of as a journey with all sorts of twists and turns and excitement. If I don't start on a journey in life, I will never gain the pleasure of the experience. If I don't make my mind up to set forth on the trip, I'll be spinning my wheels where I am. I guess that expression means that, if you don't try, you will never succeed at anything. I remember a favorite expression: "Always shoot for the moon. If you don't make it, at least you will still be up among the stars."

Harriet Lahr

### THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

Sometimes things are difficult to write about because there are a lot of things that I'm trying to think about. My love for family, my caring about my sisters and brothers. I'm a caring person. I also love my church family, whom I have adopted. It seems like so much is going on in my life to write about, and I love every bit of it. It helps me to enjoy my life. It's like being born again. And so I write about this because when I do, my pen is mightier than any sword.

### Gerald Benson

I can't remember who made that statement. Maybe Benjamin Franklin? I don't know, but I do know that I will head for my computer to find out. The bottom line of that expression for me is that aggression or violence is less powerful or strong than the written word. Physical beatings may hurt us by exacting bodily injury, but what is really hurtful is words written or spoken that hurt our spirit or mental health. It makes me think of the old saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me." There is some truth at face value to that expression;

however, sometimes biting words can hurt more than bruises and broken bones. It also makes me think that wars are fought with swords, but peace treaties are written. Laws can be written to protect or make some sense out of chaos. In that case, the written word can be mightier than physical power in keeping order.

#### Harriet Lahr

Words can also hurt and even wound. Since ancient times, orders given are usually carried out. The pen can cause the sword!

John Adler



### A Person who Influenced my Life

A person who had a big influence on my life was probably a president. I can think of many, and it might sound a little corny, but I believe that the one who influenced me most was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. I believe he was in office twelve years and died in a small town in Georgia.

George Lee

I received a present one Christmas, <u>P.T. 109</u>, by John F. Kennedy, the president I loved. He was more than a nice guy. He had good moral character. I believe that ever since his death, morals have been declining. He would have been a great president had he lived and been reelected. His brother Robert would have also been a great president. I believe President Kennedy's greatest accomplishment was the establishment of the Peace Corps. I have always admired JFK and look forward to seeing his grave when Day Treatment Center visits it on May 7.

#### John Adler

My dad, who died two years ago, was always there when I needed to hear from him. I remember when I was in this hospital in the 1980s. I used to call my dad on Saturdays at six o'clock, and he would always answer the phone. It may seem a small thing, but it was important to me. He remained there for me until his death. We were close, and that is something that I will always treasure. Now I am on my own and cannot pick up the phone to call for his help or guidance. I must get by on my own now. But my dad's help in times past is something I will use on my path to wisdom.

#### Peter T. Evans

I remember the day I met Carmine. His daughter was a woman I worked for, helping her out with her kids. Her husband brought her five children from a previous marriage, and she had three of her own. She told me before I even met him that we would definitely get along well together. When I went to her house that afternoon, he was sitting in the dining room, talking to the kids. He shook my hand in an enthusiastic manner, smiled from ear to ear, and started asking me questions about myself. We talked and talked, and he mentioned how much he loved going to the theater and the opera and his exciting life as a former entertainment reporter for The New Yorker magazine and his current job as a New Jersey FEMA officer. He was in the Navy in WWII, had been all over the world, and went to school in Edinburgh, Scotland. To see his zest for life, his humor and openness to the world, his interest in others and their life stories! I knew we were kindred spirits. We became fast friends. The age difference was never an issue. Even though he was 75 and I was nearly 30, we didn't care! We went to dinner and the theater and talked for hours about life. We went to Washington, D.C. for a weekend so he could introduce me to the monuments created for our fallen war heroes. He was like a father in a sense, but not authoritative or controlling. He was, to me, a mentor, someone who taught me to be open to life. Not to miss details, not to worry over little things. He even taught me things like good etiquette, how to tip, pick good wine, enjoy a good show and good music and good food. He had many qualities that I longed for in myself. So I learned quite a bit. He respected and admired anyone who had served his (or her) country, and that was one of his attractions for me, I guess, as a female who had followed that path. His laugh is something I'll never forget, loud and boisterous. He always attracted attention. Some people would scowl and disappear, but he didn't care. Most would join him, not even knowing why he was laughing.

I think I learned to be more cultured and sophisticated without becoming rigid or too structured. I learned to express myself more and better. He was a friend I felt safe to talk to or cry to about past troubles, and feel supported by. He was not judgmental and did not take advantage of others. He was generous of spirit and all else. I don't talk to him now that I'm married and going in another direction in life, but he is always in my heart and mind. I will call him and see him soon. He's someone I can talk to years later and feel like we've never lost touch. He is definitely the one person I can say gave me the most opportunities to learn about myself!

### DREAMS

I've had a life-long dream. I have wanted a family of my own since I was a small child. It's time I accept reality that I probably won't.

For many other people, it seems that their dream is to make as much profit as possible, at any cost.

#### John Adler

"To sleep, perchance to dream," from Shakespeare. I read somewhere that we all dream. Sometimes we don't remember what we dream or know that we even dreamed at all. My dreams come when I am asleep or wide awake. They are dreams of hope and better things for my family and myself. By things, I mean intangibles. I dream about somehow contacting those in corporate America who buy up precious, irreplaceable farmland and woods to put up superstores, paved roads, and bright lights that take away the stars and constellations. I dream about being that one voice who can stop them from destroying the planet for my children and my children's children. I dream of being able to spread tolerance and understanding of peoples and cultures that are different from my own. Dreams can be an inspiration to do something—to act, to be a catalyst for change. These are some of my dreams, which may or may not come true. As a realist, I understand my limitations. By expecting the most, I can get closer to fulfilling my dreams. By my daily actions, I hope I am in a small way teaching my children the passion I feel for our earthly home. By trying to understand and accept each person as precious and valuable, I am trying to show I can fulfill my dream of tolerance and respect for others.

### Harriet Lahr

### Interview with Elizabeth ("Liz") Betterley, LCSW

Interviewed by John Adler, Gerald Benson, and George Lee



Liz is our newest social worker in the Case Management Section, coming to us nine months ago from a job as therapist at a Mental Health Clinic in Knoxville, Tin'—essee (that's Tennessee, as Liz says it). Although new, she has quickly made herself known to case management veterans and staff as the golden girl—golden red hair, cute earrings, a glint in her eye, and a sense of mischief and fun that brightens all our spirits! She sees the humor in every situation.

Liz was born outside of Boston on a very snowy day. Her parents had to follow the snowplow to get to the hospital, fortunately in time for her entrance into the world! She was an only child, dearly loved by her parents, but she emphasizes that she was NOT spoiled! However, she did grow up feeling a bit alone in their nuclear family when her parents moved to Willow Grove, PA, leaving their extended family in the Boston area. To compensate, she made many friends with other children her age and enjoyed riding bikes and playing ball.

She graduated from Upper Moreland High School and went on to Principia College in Illinois, graduating with a degree in sociology and anthropology. You might ask, "What does a person DO with a college degree in sociology and anthropology?" Well, Liz went directly to work at a gas station, pumping gas! After that brief interlude, she took her first professional job, working for nine years as executive director of a shelter for battered women in rural southwestern Virginia. This prompted her to go on to the University of Tin'essee, where she got her social work degree. Her first social work job was as clinical social worker and therapist at the Mental Health Clinic in Knoxville. Liz took the most difficult licensure exam and passed, making her a Licensed Clinical Social Worker.

She loved her time in Knoxville and returns there on her vacations to visit her many friends. But she felt the time had come to move back to this area and be nearer to her parents.

She has found that the move has created a challenge for her—that of making new friends. Still, she has learned to be assertive in making friends and makes special efforts to keep up with her faraway friends in Tin 'essee. She has renewed a friendship with an old friend from church who has remained in this area. And she has found new friends through book discussion groups at Border's and the local library.

In her spare time, Liz enjoys decorating her new townhouse and making glass beads. Does she have favorite things? You bet! She loves brownie ice cream sundaes made with coffee ice cream. Her favorite actor is Alan Alda, and she is a M.A.S.H. "addict," collecting M.A.S.H. DVDs. Her favorite movie is <u>Ordinary People</u>. Although she doesn't have a favorite musician, she loves the music of the 60s, songs that tell stories, and the Jefferson Airplane.

Although Liz loves fun and laughter, she does have a serious side—and she's a hard worker. In her social work case management job here at Coatesville, she works with people who have been hospitalized frequently and are now living in the community. It's her job to do whatever needs to be done to help them, which includes large doses of support, listening, and kindness. Liz is always there to share a tear, a smile, a laugh.



### **Farewell to Social Work Intern**

Our hearts were heavy on May 7, 2004 when we said farewell to our Social Work Intern, Tammy Jabarin, at a morning brunch. This was the last day of Tammy's internship, and she will be sorely missed! Tammy made many friends during her year with us, gained much insider information about the VA (she's a veteran, too), and learned much about being a social worker. While she was with us, Tammy worked individually with three veterans, co-led the writing group and Friday morning therapy group with Judith, led her own stress management group, and assisted with Community Residential Care inspections. One of the most difficult tasks for social workers to learn is that they must say goodbye to their clients and the relationships that they have developed. Tammy is no exception, and it was hard for her to see her time with us come to an end. She is currently researching other internships for her second and last year in West Chester University's graduate social work program. We wish her well, and we will keep her in our thoughts and prayers. We know that she will make a terrific social worker.

Judith Moser, LSW

### Trip to American Helicopter Museum and Lunch at Hoss's Steakhouse

Twelve DTC members visited the American Helicopter Museum on March 12, 2004. They were accompanied by Judith Moser, LSW, Tammy Jabarin, Social Work Intern, and Glenn Koons, Consumer Support Program liaison. Our group received royal treatment at the museum, watched a video that detailed the history of the helicopter, and then received a guided tour through the museum. The tour culminated in a walk-through of the museum's Osprey helicopter. After the tour, we were able to walk through the museum and visit the many exhibits on our own. We sat in helicopters and worked the controls, envisioning ourselves as pilots. The trip sparked many memories of days in the military.

Our hungry bunch went from the museum to Hoss's Steakhouse and enjoyed bounteous servings from their salad bar and delicious entrees.

### **Reading Phillies Trip**

What a day! 24 Day Treatment Center veterans and 3 staff members were on the sidelines cheering when the Reading Phillies played the Harrisburg Senators in Reading on May 12, 2004. Veterans and staff were thrilled and really in the baseball spirit when the Phillies won, 9-4. They also really enjoyed the buffet lunch of ribs, burgers, dogs, corn on the cob, and all the picnic fixin's as they watched the game. This was a trip that received rave reviews, and we hope to return for another game this season.



Barbara Martinez, MSW



### **Washington, DC Trip**

On Friday, May 7, twenty DTC veterans and four staff members boarded the VA's Blue Bird bus and headed off to our nation's capital, Washington, DC. Our mission was to visit the historic and hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery and the Vietnam Memorial Wall. En route, we passed the Washington Monument, the Smithsonian, the new World War II memorial, and the FBI building. The three-hour bus trip, with rest stops at strategic points, took us from Route 1 South through Maryland, past the Baltimore Harbor, and onto the Washington Beltway. The spring scenery was spectacular as we crossed over the Potomac River, and the cherry blossom trees were starting to bloom. At one point, we rode past a patch of sweet smelling flowers, a fragrance that was most pleasant.

Our first stop, Arlington National Cemetery, is the best known of more than one hundred national cemeteries in the United States. Its green slopes shelter veterans from every war that has involved the nation. Over 290,000 veterans and their family members rest within the 624 hallowed acres. All who are remembered here have this in common: service to their country. To each one, no matter what rank or station, whether decorated hero or unknown, belongs a place of honor. Arlington looked very well cared for and manicured, with its rolling hills, granite and marble markers, and fresh flowers. We also visited the eternal flame that marks the gravesite of President John F. Kennedy.

Our next stop was the Vietnam Memorial Wall, which was designed to recognize and honor the men and women who served in one of America's most divisive wars. The memorial grew out of a need to heal the nation's wounds as America struggled to reconcile different moral and political points of view. In fact, the memorial was conceived and designed to make to political statement whatsoever about the war. The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a place where everyone, regardless of opinion, can come together and remember and honor those who served. The Memorial has paved the way towards reconciliation and healing, a process that continues today. Day Treatment Center vets walked respectfully through the seemingly endless wall of names of fallen comrades and took the time to read letters at "the Wall." Many letters were written by school children; many were written by loved ones.

On the ride back to Coatesville, the weary travelers stopped at a popular restaurant area along Route 95 and returned to the Blue Bird with dinner delights. Hamburgers, chicken, French fries, salads, pastries, lemonade, and soft drinks helped to satisfy our hunger at the end of the long day spent in Washington.

Everyone had an excellent adventure. Photographs of the trip were posted in the dayroom so all could share in the experience. Some of our veterans were suits and sports coats and ties for the trip; all were well-mannered gentlemen who represented the Coatesville VA with pride and dignity.

### DTC Members Support May 22, 2004 NAMIWALKS!

Day Treatment Center sponsored Rob Chisholm, Founding Director of Compeer Chester County, with a pledge of \$50 at the recent NAMIWALK, held at the State Capitol in Harrisburg. The walk was organized by NAMI as a means of publicizing NAMI and also to raise funds for NAMI's important work in supporting, educating, and advocating for mental health consumers and their families. We reprint Rob's thank you letter:

Dear Judith,

Thanks to veterans for donation of \$50 in support of my NAMIWALKS! Participation on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. I was <u>very</u> pleased—and <u>amazed</u>—to have sponsorships <u>totaling \$720</u>!!

Well over 1,000 walkers went to Harrisburg on a beautiful day. I rode on a Chester

County bus with 48 people.

Thanks again, from the bottom of my heart!

In friendship,

Rob Chisholm

Judith Moser, LSW

### **April—National Poetry Month**

Because April is National Poetry Month, Day Treatment Center veterans were subjected to daily poems—my personal favorites. Themes of poetry, read aloud each morning, ranged from spring, to love, to nature, to poems of strength, inspiration and beauty...also, humor and wisdom. Some of my favorite poets include Robert Frost, Maya Angelou, William Shakespeare, Langston Hughes, James Weldon, Johnson, William Wordsworth, Joyce Kilmer, Carl Sandburg, Marge Tindal, Paul Lawrence Dunbar, and Rudyard Kipling. We read very moving and perceptive works by Native Americans, as well as funny, lighthearted limericks. The veterans shared their own limericks, and I was inspired to write one of my own. Here is my attempt:

I work at the Coatesville VA,
Never had a really bad day.
Working with vets
Is as good as it gets.
There's not a thing more I can say.

Guess I'll keep my day job!

Harriet Lahr

### **Terry DeAngelo's Art Exhibition**

Day Treatment Center veterans attended a solo art exhibition at the Chester County Art Association in West Chester on April 14, 2004. Terry DeAngelo, leader of the DTC weekly art group, was the featured artist. Terry has led the group that the Medical Center since May of 2003 and has guided the creative talents of the veterans with his knowledge and caring demeanor. We are very fortunate to have him. His wife, Angela, has also supported our activities and was the chief "popcorn popper" at our spring clothesline art exhibit.

Terry's masterpieces were displayed at the CCAA for the entire month of April. Vets and staff enjoyed viewing his variety of oil paintings, landscapes, and designs. Everyone had his or her "perennial favorite." It was very interesting to hear Terry share his thoughts and the inspiration behind his masterpieces. His works displayed

ranged from 1978 to the present. The title of the show was "Wanderings: Past and Present," which captured the theme of the exhibit.

Darci Goldberg, Director of the Chester County Art Association, was also on hand to greet the veterans and graciously welcomed us to the facility. She showed us a very educational and entertaining video on perspective, motion, and depth perception.

After visiting the Art Association, the group stopped to eat at a local restaurant. Critiquing artwork can increase one's appetite, and our veterans enjoy sitting down to a good meal! All of the vets enjoyed the outing, expressed thanks for the trip, and showed an interest in more off-station activities.





### Day Treatment Center Garden



The seven original members of the DTC garden group, led by Judith Moser, LSW, met for the first time on Thursday, June 10. Our purpose was to install and keep up a garden along the walkway at the north end of Building 57. Much effort was needed to develop our plan. First we needed to get permission from the Medical Center facilities section supervisor, Greg Lewis. We are very grateful that he not only gave his immediate approval for our project but also had the site rototilled that very day! Next we needed to talk to Joe DiFalco, vocational rehabilitation specialist, to inform him of our purpose, since his CWT crew works so hard to keep the Medical Center grounds beautiful. Joe was very gracious, even offered his crew's assistance with mulch and promise of watering during hot, dry spells (none needed yet, thanks to the bounteous rain this spring!). On our first workday, CWT members working nearby helped us clear the few remaining weeds away and level the site. Finally, Medical Media provided us with a lovely sign to identify our "Day Treatment Center Garden." Already the garden had gained us some positive relationships within the Medical Center!

Another important task was to purchase plants. Six of us visited Frank's in Exton, returning with many pots and flats of red and white begonias and petunias, yellow marigolds and sunflowers, and blue and white striped petunias, as well as hand trowels to plant with and pads to kneel on. After the group decided how to arrange the plants and set them in place, our experienced gardeners, Jay and John, began to plant! Day Treatment members and staff watched in wonder as the garden became a reality! By 2 p.m. the garden was planted, and group members were very proud of their efforts.

A fun diversion on our return from Frank's was a stop for lunch at Coppa 82, where we sustained ourselves very well with delicious Italian food!

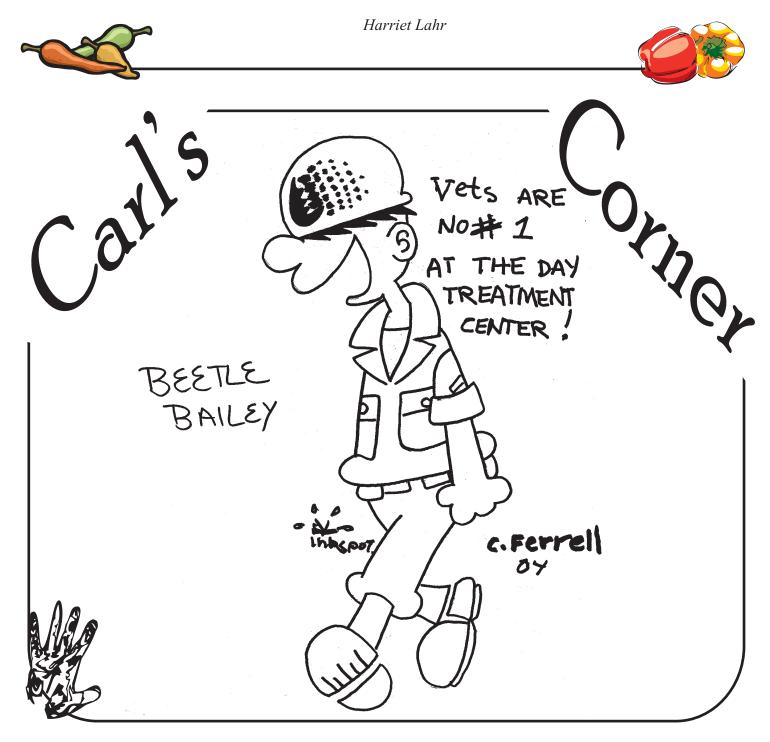
Now that the garden is planted, group members have enthusiastically taken on the task of maintaining the garden, removing spent flowers, leaves, and debris. Many people have stopped to admire the garden on their way into the building, and we can see that it brings as much pleasure to others as it does to us.





### The Green Dragon

On Friday, June 18, nine Day Treatment Center veterans and two staff members took a trip to Ephrata, PA to visit the Green Dragon. The Green Dragon is a huge indoor/outdoor farmer's market located in scenic Lancaster County. There are over 400 vendors who sell items ranging from baked goods to clothing to homemade ice cream to household and garden supplies. Of course, fresh fruits and vegetables grown on local farms are another major attraction for shoppers. Veterans helped to support local produce and wares by purchasing hats, clothing, artwork, baked goods, delicious lunches, and one very fancy cane. The very tired, but happy, group returned to the DTC van with treasures found and stomachs full. A good time was had by all!



# Poetry Corner

## The Tob of the Poet When His Feet Touch Ground David Babb

Try to find words whose simple presence Illumine the truth unchanging which stands at the core where wisdom sleeps. Unwritten it beckons the genius of the reader To show itself momentarily by encountering the mystery behind all observation. The pen then loses its reputation as a weapon And the paper becomes a reflection of the Higher Self. You must write as if what you discover is no special secret or key, Merely something about something we know Which time finally lets us all see That "seeing" leads to new vistas And visions that help us create To be more like our Creator To find freedom in what we call fate.



### The Room

David Babb

The room is barely square, one window's blinds are shut. Two lights supply the writer's hands to move. There are pictures which speak to any eyes that look their way. And poems which direct the reader to their source. And there is one full desk and chair where the poet loves to live in his dreams and his reality as they merge to find the poet's truth.

### The World is my Church

David Babb

The world is my church,
Each tree a cathedral spire.
The prayers of being
a sermon of the soul they carry.
The pulpit the body within which we dwell.

Who listens as each preacher serves up his holy fire And inner inspiration replaces banal desire?

The one God who thru so many facets shows the one Love
Which all of us are seeking or somehow know.

### The Oate Ron Cheatham

A sidewalk café, by chance we meet, I'm taken aback, your beauty so sweet. The evening is young, so I dare to ensue, If I could share time enjoyed with you. With a thought, a nod, at last you consent, We speak of good times and places we went. We talk, we dine, time passes so right, A memory is born this summer night. The sidewalk we stroll, at leisure we pace, Just up ahead a disco's in place. As we enter, your hand on my arm, Upon you face a smile so warm. People are talking, the music is loud, Gently I guide through the onpressing crowd. We find a table, I present you a seat, As bodies sway to the rhythm and beat. We've come for fun, a moment of bliss, A slow song begins, we choose to do this. Arm in arm we melt together, Fitly entwined, as light as a feather. We step and move the two as if one, Oblivious to others as if there were none. The evening's enchanted, time seems to fly, Dancing as angels within the sky. When evening's ended, it's time to depart, We both share memories to warm the heart. I escort you home, it's as I should do. Thanks for this evening, I say unto you. Maybe again, you reply with a nod. Peace be to you, and go with God.

### Thanks Ron Cheatham

Again, my Father, I stand in awe of you, The euphoric splendor of the things you do. You took the substance of a thing called hope And built my dreams when I could not cope. Taking interest in the minutest way, Using precious time to mold each day. If I could speak, what I now feel, Of love and how you make it real. The special way you touched my heart Seems to swell my every part. Of gratitude and depths it's from, If I could speak...but words won't come. Then you would know what you have done For me, your eternally grateful son. So all the praise my soul can send, I heap upon my God, my friend.

### l WA1⊤ Ron Cheatham

I've had to wait to make it through,
 I wonder what I'll say or do.
 Life's been hard along the way,
 I've had to adjust from day to day.
 Wisdom I gained, understanding I found.

They walked me through some troublesome ground.
 Strength is measured by pressure of test,
 Endurance a challenge for even the best.
 Dawn ebbs. A new day begins,
 Filled with challenge to see who wins.
 This one thing I always knew,
 I would wait to make it through.

### My Father

Judy Perdue My father was a great man, He always held out a helping hand. Throughout life he was steady, And in most situations he was ready. When his country called, he was there, And in life's situations he was fair. As a father, there was none better. But sometimes his face would set hard as leather. His flashing blue eyes and black hair Seemed to say he'd always be there. In his work he was dedicated. To serve his fellow man he was educated. In his field he had no equal, His work in life had no sequel. His traveling companion of eleven years Stood up among all his peers To express the respect that he had After the Cold War made the world go mad. His leaving this life made many bereave, Especially his daughters, of which there were three. To many in life he was no stranger That in the forces of man there was always danger. His life-work kept him very involved With the many problems he had to solve. Throughout my life, even 'til December, His bounteous love I will always remember. Poetry | Corner The world thanks you, P.F.

## Princess to a Queen Dane No Smith

I had a dream of a princess in white, to have and to hold all through the night.

Thank you for making my dream come true, for that princess in white, Honey, that's you.

My princess in white has grown to my queen. since then my life has become sober and clean.

I am a king who cannot rule alone.
I need my queen to sit on her throne.

Our kingdom is ruled from the laws up above. We'll fill it with peace and guide it with love.

And when the demons invade our land, our kingdom of peace shall make a stand. From the king all the way down to the farmer, we shall grab our swords and suit up with armor.

And we'll fight till the end as bloody as it may be to protect our families and keep our land free.

If our castle should crumble to the ground, we shall call our reserves from towns all around.

Then God will send angels from up above to rebuild our kingdom of peace and of love.

Forever is my dream, and this king will keep dreaming, because I know in my heart the demons are still scheming.



SPECIAL THANKS TO THIS ISSUE'S CONTRIBUTORS:

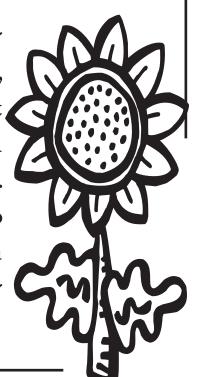
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### Day Treatment Center Mission Statement

The CVAMC Day Treatment Center seeks to provide a supportive, therapeutic milieu for outpatient veterans who are coping with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues. The program works to assist veterans to attain their highest level of functioning in interpersonal relationships and in their communities.



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